

SERVICE AVIATION

Royal Air Force and
Official Announcements :



Fleet Air Arm News :
Military Aviation Abroad



"Flight" photograph.

SANS TURRET: The D.H. Don appears in a new form—as a fast communications machine, for which purpose it is now being supplied in quantity to the R.A.F. With the 525 h.p.-for-take-off Gipsy Twelve (or Gipsyking, as it is designated for Service purposes) the Don has a top speed of 213 m.p.h., and cruises at 192 m.p.h. with 62 per cent. power at 11,000ft. One of the two engine-cooling ducts can be seen in the leading edge.

A Visit to France

A ROYAL Air Force mission left for France last Sunday on a visit to the French Air Force. The visit, which will last until the coming week-end, is in return for that paid to the Royal Air Force by the French Air Force last June.

The members of the mission are Air Chief Marshal Sir Cyril Newall, G.C.B., C.M.G., C.B.E., A.M., Chief of the Air Staff; A. V.-M. W. S. Douglas, M.C., D.F.C., Assistant Chief of the Air Staff; Group Capt. N. H. Bottomley, C.I.E., D.S.O., A.F.C., Bomber Command; Group Capt. A. H. Orlebar, A.F.C., Officer Commanding Royal Air Force Station, Northolt; Sqn. Ldr. J. M. J. C. J. I. Rock de Besombes, of the Air Ministry; and Flt Lt. H. Eccles, personal assistant to Chief of the Air Staff.

The party travelled in the Air Council's D.H. 86B, leaving Hendon after lunch on Sunday and arriving at Le Bourget at about 4 p.m.

Air Minister's Appreciation

THE Secretary of State for Air, Sir Kingsley Wood, has addressed the following message to Air Officers Commanding-in-Chief, Royal Air Force Commands at home, and to Air Officers Commanding Overseas Commands:—

"Now that it has been possible to modify the special arrangements which were necessary during the recent period of international tension, I wish to express the appreciation of the Air Council and my own to all ranks of the Air Force for the prompt and enthusiastic response that was made.

"A special debt of gratitude is due to the personnel of the Auxiliary Air Force and the Observer Corps, who were called at very short notice to leave their homes and their daily occupations to man the fighter and balloon squadrons and the air defence observer system. Some of them had to leave their civil employment. I do not doubt that employers who had to release members of the Auxiliary Air Force and the Observer Corps for this vital national service will take them back into their employment in the capacity in which they had been working before the emergency.

"I should also like to add my thanks to the civilians of all ranks at the Air Ministry and at the Royal Air Force establishments for their loyal devotion to duty.

"The general response, whether for service in the air or on the ground, could not have been more complete or more convincing."

Royal New Zealand Air Force Expansion

PLANS for the establishment of a stronger New Zealand regular Air Force consisting of 100 officers and 900 airmen are disclosed in the annual report of the Dominion's Air Department, just issued by the Minister of Defence (the Hon. F. Jones).

The scheme provides for two Air Force Squadrons, a Flying Training School, and a depot for storage and repair of equipment. The regular personnel will also act as instructors for the Territorial Air Force and Reserve.

This Air Force Reserve is to be built up as the result of an agreement with the Royal New Zealand Aero Club, which undertakes to provide 100 selected candidates to be trained for service in the Air Force in emergency. Provision is also being made for the creation of Territorial Air Force Squadrons at Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin.

The report stresses the importance of encouraging young New Zealanders to join the Royal Air Force in Great Britain. "Until this year," it states, "applicants for commissions paid their own passages to England and took the risk of not being selected on arrival, but by an arrangement with the Air Ministry the system has now been changed and candidates are selected in New Zealand and their passages paid." The present strength of the Royal New Zealand Air Force is 37 officers and 302 men in the Regular branch, 13 officers and 106 men in the Reserve, and 73 officers and 75 men in the Territorials.

Balloons Over London

A DEMONSTRATION of barrage balloons over London was given last Saturday, and some twenty-five were flown from their mobile winches in various places—often from comparatively small spaces between buildings.

Great public interest was taken in the inflation and ascent of the balloons, and this ought to bring in more recruits for the squadrons.

There was a stiff breeze. Five of the balloons broke loose, and the trailing cables did some minor damage to chimney pots, one causing an electrical short on the railway near Belvedere, Kent. One of the fugitives nearly reached Denmark but finally sank in the sea. The other four were quickly recaptured.

R.A.F. Benevolent Fund: Lord Wakefield's Gift

THE expansion of the Vanbrugh Castle School, which exists for the sons of deceased airmen, has been made possible through a very generous gift by Viscount Wakefield of Hythe to the Benevolent Fund. This has enabled the Council to purchase the property adjoining Vanbrugh Castle, which was presented to the Fund in 1920 by Mr. Alexander Duckham. The inclusion of the adjoining property will afford accommodation for a considerable increase in the establishment.

This gift comes at a time when it will be of the greatest value in view of the growing waiting list resulting from the expansion of the Royal Air Force. Quite recently Lord Wakefield presented the Benevolent Fund with £10,000 in order to found a benefaction for